REFLECTIONS

ON THE

IMPORTATION

OF

BAR-IRON,

From our own

Colonies of NORTH-AMERICA.

IN

Anſwer to a late Pamphlet on that Subject.

HUMBLY

Submitted to the Conſideration of the Honourable the HOUSE of COMMONS, *March* 14, 1757.

BRITISH MUSEUM

REFLECTIONS

ON THE

Importation of BAR-IRON.

THAT Iron, as a Metal, is of infinitely more real Uſe than Gold, is a Fact too obvious to ſtand in Need of Proof; ſince the very Neceſſaries of Life could neither be procured, nor any uſeful Art or Manufactory carried on without the Aſſiſtance drawn from that valuable Material. It muſt therefore be of the higheſt Import to every Nation to procure a Supply of this eſſential Article ſufficient for all its Uſes; and if ſuch Nation could procure the Whole, or even but Part of it, out of its own Bowels, it would (in Proportion to the Quantity which it drew from within itſelf) have the leſs Reaſon to depend on a Supply from diſtant Countries, in Time of War, or any other Emergency, which very Emergency would render the Navigation more tedious and precarious. This is a Truth which I believe will hardly be conteſted. When therefore we ſee ſo conſiderable a Body of Men, as the Proprietors of the Iron-Works, (ſeveral of whom are Perſons of the firſt Rank and greateſt Property in the Nation) treated as the loweſt and dirtieſt of Men. repreſented ſo mean as to prefer their own Intereſt to the general Good of the whole Community, and ſtigmatized with the opprobrious Name of *Monopolizers*, an Appellation calculated to expoſe them

to the Fury of popular Reſentment; Self-Defence then becomes a *Duty*, and when the Caſe is *fairly* ſtated, the *Cauſe* of the Proprietors of the Iron-Works will appear to be the *Cauſe* of the *Publick*.

A late Pamphlet avowedly written to procure the Importation of Bar-Iron from *America* to every Port of this Kingdom *Duty-free*, abounds with *Invectives* of this Nature. It is fraught with bold Aſſertions without Proof, groſs Miſrepreſentations, and groundleſs Suggeſtions; and an Air of Popularity is thrown over the whole. To remove therefore thoſe *Impreſſions*, which the Varniſh of Popularity may make upon thoſe who are either Strangers to, or have but lightly conſider'd the Subject, I ſhall

I. State the Caſe of the Iron-Works in this Kingdom.

II. Shew the Nature of the Supplies of Iron which we receive from *Ruſſia* and *Sweden*

III. Prove, that the Detriment ariſing to the Nation from this Bill, if it ſhould paſs into a Law, would greatly outweigh the Benefits propoſed by the Importation of Bar-Iron Duty-free from *America* to every Port of this Kingdom; and I ſhall conſider the Objections of this Writer, as they fall under each reſpective Head.

Iron is the natural Produce of this Iſland, as well as Tin, Lead, and Coals, and conſequently a conſiderable Part of our *intrinſick national Wealth*. Our Mines of this moſt *uſeful* of all Metals are inexhauſtible, and would afford a *Quantity* equal to the greateſt poſſible Demands of this Nation, as far as the Quality will admit of. We have Hands and Induſtry for Labour, Rivers proper for the Motion of Mills and other Engines, and waſte Lands ſufficient for the Production of Cord Wood, the want of a proper Quantity of which is the only Diſadvantage we labour under: but ſtill a Diſadvantage which might eaſily be removed by proper Attention and Encouragement. Could we raiſe a proper Supply of Cord Wood, it would be a great Inducement to open new Mines, ſome of which might perhaps

haps produce Iron of a ſuperior Quality to any we have at preſent.

As the Caſe now ſtands, we have 109 Forges in *England* and *Wales*, excluſive of the Works in *Scotland*. Of the Produce of the 14 Forges in *Surry*, *Kent*, and *Suſſex*, we have no certain Account; but the annual Produce of Iron made in the other 95 Forges amounts to 16,000 Tons. The Number of Hands employ'd in making ſo large a Quantity of Iron, and reducing it to different Aſſortments proper for the Handy-craft Trade is ſo well known, that I have no Occaſion to ſpeak of it: But the Quantity of Wood made uſe of (allowing eleven Cords to every Ton of Iron) amounts to 176,000 Cords of Wood. How great a Number of Acres are requir'd to produce this Wood, and how large a Supply of Bark this vaſt Quantity of Wood annually yields to the Tanners may be eaſily imagin'd. An Article ſo eſſential to the very *Being* of the Leather Trade in this Kingdom; yet as it is an Article ſtrongly in Favour of the Proprietors of the Iron Works, the Writer abovemention'd has very *prudently* paſſed it over in ſilence, an Omiſſion however which every unprejudiced Perſon muſt deem extremely unfair.

But as neither the *Quantity* or *Quality* of our Iron will anſwer the Demands of our Country for every *particular* Uſe, we are obliged for a Supply of *proper* Iron to have recourſe to.

2. *Sweden* and *Ruſſia*, the Nature of which Supply, I am now to conſider. It is ſelf-evident that Iron is of *different* Kinds; that each *different Kind* has *peculiar different Qualities*, and that each *different Quality* is adapted to peculiar *different* Uſes.

Hardneſs is the Quality in which the *Britiſh* Iron is found to be deficient. Hence ariſes the Demand for an Iron proper to convert into Steel, the Manufactory of which makes a very extenſive Branch of the Commerce of this Nation. *This Quality* is likewiſe abſolutely neceſſary for the Conſtruction of Anchors, Chain-Plates, and other Articles in Ship-Building, *&c.* the want of this Quality in our own Iron oblig'd, and (unleſs this Defect can be remedied) will ever oblige

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us to have recourſe to *Sweden*, as the *Swediſh* Iron is of all others the moſt applicable to theſe Uſes. As the *American* Iron, from Experience, is found to be equally deficient with *Engliſh* Iron in the Quality of Hardneſs, and conſequently as incapable, by its very Nature, of being applied to the Uſes of *Swediſh* Iron, it muſt follow, that it cannot poſſibly ſupply the Defect of that *eſſential Quality* ſo much complain'd of in the *Engliſh* Iron; ſince by all Experiments hitherto made, it invariably appears to be of the very *ſame Nature*; conſequently it can never, in the very Nature of Things, interfere with the *Swediſh* Iron; nor ſave any Part of thoſe Sums which we are obliged to ſend annually to *Sweden* in Exchange for that *neceſſary* Commodity.

Swediſh Iron is in this Light, in the ſtricteſt Senſe of the Word, *a Naval Store*, and how neceſſary Naval Stores are to a commercial Nation, and how eſſential they are to our very *Being*, as a Maritime Power, we leave to every Man's Judgment to determine.

Ruſſia is a Country which enjoys more *natural* Advantages, with reſpect to Commerce, than any other Country in the known World. The Extent of her Dominions is immenſe, and ſtretches through a variety of Climates. The Number and Size of her Rivers open a Communication not only through every Part of her wide extended Dominions, but into almoſt every Part of the Globe, and the Carriage by Sledges is ſo very cheap and commodious, that the moſt ſevere Winter rather facilitates than obſtructs this Communication. The Cheapneſs of Land and Labour exceeds that of every other Country, and enables her, not only to ſupply all her own Wants of Naval Stores of all Kinds, but in a great Meaſure the large Demands of this Iſland. Our *Ruſſia* Company imports annually from 12 to 15000 Tons of Iron, which is all made in *Siberia*, a Country ſuperior in Extent to all our *American* Plantations put together, and at leaſt equal to them in every Advantage, with reſpect to Naval Stores. Land is there at leaſt as cheap, and Proviſions as plentiful as in *America*. The Wood of their vaſt Foreſts

reſts coſts no more than the Trouble of cutting, and the Pay of a Labourer *per Diem*, does not exceed an *Engliſh* Half-penny. To crown theſe *natural* Advantages, they are inacceſſible to a foreign Enemy, and conſequently in no Danger of Invaſion from any ambitious Neighbour. How large a Quantity of Iron the People in *Siberia* are able to make may be gathered from the following Relation, " When the Empreſs " *Anna* declared War againſt *Sweden*, one *Demetoff*, " chief Maſter of the Iron Works in *Siberia*, propoſed " an effectual Method of ruining *Sweden*, without " ſtriking a Blow." His Propoſal was this---" That " if the Empreſs would ſecure to him the ſole Property " of the Mines in *Siberia*, for a Time ſpecified in his " Propoſals, he would engage at all Times to ſell his " Iron Thirty *per Cent.* cheaper than the *Swedes* could " poſſibly afford to ſell theirs; and even to reduce the " Price of his ſtill lower if it ſhould be found expe- " dient." The Propoſal was not indeed accepted, as the Court was afraid to truſt ſo much Power in the Hands of *one* Man, in a Country at ſo vaſt a Diſtance from the Capital. This is a Fact extremely well known to ſeveral Merchants now living, who at that Time reſided in *Ruſſia*.

Ruſſia Iron though as yet inferior to the *Swediſh*, is ſtill as far as we can judge, ſuperior in Quality to the *Engliſh* or *American*, which are both relatively ſoft, when compared with the Iron of the *North*, and conſequently leſs proper for the Converſion into Steel.

It is ſuppoſed that all the various Kinds of Iron are capable of being converted into Steel; but of all the Sorts of Steel *that* are made from the *Swediſh Orground* Iron, is by much the beſt that we are able to prepare in this Nation, nor can we poſſibly make the fine edged Tools without it. If then Steel prepared from *Swediſh* Iron *only* is ſo eſſentially neceſſary to ſo conſiderable a Branch of the Iron Manufactory, and the *Swediſh* Iron is equally as neceſſary for the Conſtruction of our Shipping, it amounts to the Force of a Demonſtration, that *American* Iron, which is confeſſedly deſtitute of thoſe valuable Qualities, can never poſſibly interfere

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with, or leſſen the Demand for that Iron which we are *compelled* to buy from *Sweden*.

If on the other Hand *Ruſſia* is able to make ſo immenſe a Quantity of Iron as I have already ſhewn; if ſhe can ſell that Iron to us at a much lower Price than our *American* Colonies either can, or in all human probability ever will be able to afford it; the Conſequence is equally as certain that the *Britiſh* Iron, *and that only muſt be the Sacrifice*.

The Writer ſeems greatly alarm'd, and endeavours to alarm his Readers too, at the preſent Connection between *France* and *Ruſſia*, which he urges as a concluſive Argument in Favour of the Bill: But the Man muſt be a ſhallow Politician indeed, who does not know that there can be no durable Connection between Nation and Nation, but what is founded upon *mutual Intereſt*, and that the late patch'd up Affair between thoſe two Powers is (like his ſeeming Fright) no more than a temporary Expedient juſt to ſerve a preſent Turn. Intereſt is the only Tye between Princes; and all other Alliances, whether founded on Inter-Marriages or preſent political Exigencies, muſt give way as ſoon as ever they claſh with this indiſſoluble Tye.

Two Thirds at leaſt of the *Ruſſian* Exports are taken off by *Britiſh* Subjects, and the Balance of this Trade is ſo much in Favour of *Ruſſia*, that ſhe draws a great Part of the Bullion, which when coin'd circulates in Specie, from the *Britiſh* Dominions. And as *Britain* is the chief Mart, at which *Ruſſia* can vend her Exports, the Commerce with *Britain* will be of infinitely greater Value to her, than any Advantages ſhe can ever reap from an Alliance with *France*. How dear this Commerce is to *Ruſſia*, will appear by the Privileges and Immunities which ſhe has granted by expreſs Treaty to the Subjects of *Britain*, in Preference to thoſe of any other Nation: And when that able Miniſter Monſ. *de Dieu*, Ambaſſador Extraordinary from the States General, in the Year 1745, tried every Method to procure a Treaty of Commerce for his Countrymen the *Dutch*, on the Plan of that between *Britain* and *Ruſſia*: He was put off with this memorable

rable Anſwer, " That when he could prove that *Ruſ-*
" *ſia* drew the ſame Advantage from the Commerce
" with *Holland*, which ſhe did from the Commerce
" with *Britain*, that then the *Dutch* ſhould receive
" equal Favour with the *Britiſh* Subjects." A Fact well-known to the noble Lord who reſided at that very Time at St. *Petersburgh*, as Ambaſſador Extraordinary, and Plenipotentiary from his *Britannic* Majeſty. *Ruſſia* always looks upon *Britain* as her hereditary Friend, and even when the Differences between his late Majeſty and *Peter the Great* aroſe to ſo great a Height, that the Port of *Revel* was actually block'd up by a *Britiſh* Fleet, under the Command of Sir *John Norris*; yet the *Britiſh* Subjects in *Ruſſia* receiv'd the ſame Protection, and the ſame Favours from that great Prince, as they did before that Indignity was offer'd. A Behaviour which undoubtedly aroſe from a Senſe of thoſe ſignal Advantages which *Ruſſia* receiv'd from *Britain*.

I am ſenſible, that our Commerce with *Ruſſia* lies open to a very popular Objection, drawn from the large Quantity of Bullion which we annually pay to *Ruſſia*, where the Balance is conſiderably againſt us; but I ſhall refer my Reader for my Anſwer to this ſeemingly formidable Objection to the

3d Place, where I now come to prove, That the Detriment ariſing to the Nation from this Bill, if it ſhould paſs into a Law, would greatly outweigh the Benefit propoſed by the Importation of Iron Duty free from *America*, to every Port of this Kingdom; and I ſhall at the ſame Time conſider this Writer and his Objections.

That Colonies under proper Regulations are of great Service to a Nation, is an undoubted Truth; and that they ought to receive the utmoſt Encouragement (as far as is conſiſtent with the real *Intereſt* of their Mother Country) is equally as certain. But if they grow up to a State of Independance, or if they draw off too many uſeful Hands, or interfere with thoſe Manufactures, which are the chief Source of the Wealth of their Mother Country, they may at laſt

prove the Deſtruction of that Nation to which they ow'd their *Being*—*Rome* and *Carthage* may in ſome Meaſure, aſcribe their Ruin to the Number and Extent of their Colonies; and *Spain*, which not two Centuries ago, aim'd at univerſal Monarchy, is now, by the Loſs of her moſt uſeful Hands, which together with her Induſtry paſſed over into *America*, dwindled into little more than the Bullion Carrier of *Europe*, which ſhe was ſo lately at the Point of giving Law to.

Though (I hope) no Danger of that Kind will ever be apprehended from our Colonies, yet within theſe few Years, have they not ſhewn an *encroaching* Spirit with reſpect to the Manufactures of their Mother Country? Are they not encourag'd in the Production of every Article which does not interfere with the immediate Produce or Manufacturies of *Britain?* Are they not encourag'd to import as great a Quantity of *Raw* Materials as they are able? Yet did they not rival us ſo far in the Hat Manufactury, that the Legiſlature in the Year 1733, were oblig'd to reſtrain them by a Law, without which this Nation muſt have inevitably loſt that valuable Manufactury? Do they not however ſtill continue to manufacture Hats? Have they not ſet up many Looms both for Woollen and Linen Cloths, in Spite of all our Laws and Reſtrictions? Was not a large Præmium allow'd by the Government of *New-England* to the *American* Manufacturer for Scythes, Nails, *&c.* out of their publick Money, and is not the Demand for Scythes from this Country for that Colony now at an End, and does not their Demand for Nails, and ſuch Edge Tools as may not require, by the Uſes to which they may be adapted, ſo fine Steel as that which is converted from the *Swediſh* Iron, diminiſh annually? But I ſhall make no more Reflections upon the Behaviour of thoſe Colonies, which at this Time may be term'd invidious, ſince their preſent Diſtreſs calls loudly for the ſtrongeſt Aſſiſtance from their Mother Country?

That Iron and Timber are of the moſt eſſential Uſe to this Country muſt be allow'd; and that we were able

able to produce a Quantity of each of thoſe Articles equal to our Wants from our own Iſland, muſt be the ſincere Wiſh of every Lover of his Country. Whatever Scheme therefore tends to leſſen the Production of thoſe valuable Materials, muſt be highly injurious to our own Country.—But as this Bill, if it ſhould paſs into a Law, would not only leſſen, but in the End deſtroy the Productions of thoſe Materials; (I mean *deprive* us of the very Means of producing Iron from the Ore to a State fit for the Manufacturers) we have all the Reaſon to hope from the Wiſdom and Sagacity of a *Britiſh* Parliament, that this Bill will never paſs into a Law. The two firſt of theſe Propoſitions will ſcarce be deny'd by the moſt ſtrenuous Advocate for this Bill; the Concluſion therefore drawn from the Premiſes remains only to be prov'd, which will bring the Point in diſpute to a ſhort Iſſue.

It is a well known Fact, that there are many Mines of Iron in *England* and *Wales* yet unopen'd for Want of proper Encouragement, and it is no leſs certain, that *Scotland* abounds both with Wood and Mines of Iron. It is no leſs certain, that one great Obſtacle to Undertakings of this Nature, of late Years has been, leaſt a Bill for importing *Bar Iron Duty free from* America, *into all the Ports of this Kingdom*, ſhould paſs into a Law: And an Attempt of this Kind made in the Year 1738, actually quaſh'd a very large Subſcription, enter'd into but a little before that Time, for erecting Iron Works in *Scotland*. Thus the Fear that a Bill of this Kind ſhould either paſs then, or might ſucceed at ſome other Time, render'd a moſt beneficial Scheme abſolutely abortive; hinder'd a conſiderable Increaſe in the Produce of our own natural Iron, and depriv'd both Parts of this Kingdom of the Benefit of ſo valuable an Acquiſition. And this will ever be the Caſe as long as this Bill is held like a Rod over our own Iron Works.

If the bare Terror, occaſion'd from a Bill of this Kind, has already had ſo bad an Effect upon the Progreſs of our own Iron Works, it muſt ariſe from

this Apprehenſion; that the inferior Price of the Bar Iron from *America*, would in the End ſilence our own Forges, and oblige the Owners of our Woodlands to grub them up, and convert them to ſome other Uſe, which might be more profitable. But we hope the Wiſdom of the Legiſlature will free them from theſe Apprehenſions, which are but too well grounded.

The Iron Mines in *America* are not only inexhauſtible, but the Ore lies ſo very near the Surface of the Earth, that it may be extracted from the Mine with much leſs Labour, and at much leſs Expence than we can poſſibly do in this Country. Wood, the neceſſary Material for making Iron, is not only worth little, but in many Parts of that Country is a Nuiſance; as it prevents the Owners from forming the Land into profitable Plantations. Thus the Price of Land and Wood in *America*, is little, if at all inferior to *Ruſſia*; but *Ruſſia* has ſo much the Advantage in the Price of Labour, and the Shortneſs, Cheapneſs, and Safety of Navigation (in Time of War) that *American* Bar Iron can never come in Competition with that of *Ruſſia* at the *Britiſh* Market. The Labour in *America* is chiefly executed by Negroes, the Price of whom *per* Head, does not amount to ſo much as one Years Wages of a *Britiſh* Artificer. The hard Labour is done by the out-door Negroes, every Family of which has a ſmall Portion of Land allotted them by their Maſter, on which they build their miſerable Huts, and raiſe their own Proviſion; conſequently the Expence of their Food is little, if at all felt by their Owner; and their wretched Cloathing can ſtand him in but a Trifle. The Price of the Labour of *Britiſh* Artificers in *America* is undoubtedly much higher than that of the ſame Kind of Artificers in *England*; but as moſt of the Negroes are capable of being form'd into good Artificers, as many of them actually are ſo; it is too evident, that notwithſtanding the Charge of Freight, (which as Iron is brought in Ballaſt muſt be very ſmall) and the Expence of Inſurance; the *American* Iron will always greatly underſell the *Britiſh* at Market. Conſequently the Plea urg'd by this Writer,

(page 18.) in Favour of this Bill drawn from the Dearneſs of Labour in *America*, muſt fall to the Ground. But to avoid Altercation, and to place this Affair in the ſtrongeſt Light, I ſhall bring a *Caſe* in *Point*, which I cannot only aver to be true to my own certain knowledge, but it is a Fact well known to every Exporter of Hats from this Country to the *Weſt-Indies*.—In the Year 1729, I bought a Beaver Hat at *Antigua* of a *Rhode* Iſland Trader for 13 *s.* 6 *d.* Sterling; at my Return the Year following, I ſhew'd the ſame Hat to a noted Maker in *London*, who aſſur'd me, that he could not afford to make one of equal Goodneſs with mine for 30 *s.* Now, although the *American* bought the Beaver Wool (the raw Material) at a much cheaper Rate than the *Engliſh* Manufacturer poſſibly could do; yet if the Price of Labour was ſo exceſſively high in *America*, as this Writer repreſents it to be, how was the *American* Trader able to ſell his Hats above 100 *per Cent.* cheaper than the *Britiſh* Manufacturer could afford to make them for in *London*, notwithſtanding the Expence of Freight to *Antigua*, and the Riſque he muſt run from the *Spaniſh Guarda Coſta's*. The Legiſlature therefore very wiſely endeavour'd by an Act of Parliament, to ſuppreſs a Manufactury in *America*, which muſt have been ſo fatal to our own in *England*. Now if the *American* Manufacturer of Hats, had been permitted to have imported his Hats *Duty free* to this Iſland, I leave this Writer to judge, whether we ſhould have had a Hat-maker left in *England*, notwithſtanding the greater Expence of the Freight from *Rhode* Iſland to *Britain* than to *Antigua*. Negroes do all the laborious Work in *America*. They work as many Hours *per Diem*, as the *Britiſh* Labourer, under the Inſpection of a ſtrict Overſeer, who is never ſparing of the moſt ſevere Correction if they are idle, of which I have ſeen many Inſtances that were even ſhocking to human Nature: Spirituous Liquors, the *Bane* of the *Britiſh* Labourer, are out of the Reach of the Negroe, why therefore the Negroe ſhould not be as ſtrong and as capable of hard Labour as the *Britiſh* Labourer, is to

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me incomprehenſible; nay, if we conſider the *enervating* Quality of ſpirituous Liquors, from which it is impoſſible to debar the *Britiſh* Artificer, I ſhould imagine the Negroe to be much more ſo. If therefore the *American* by the very Situation of his Mines, can raiſe his Ore with much leſs Labour than the *Briton*; if by the inexhauſtible Store and Cheapneſs of his Charcoal, he can run it into Pigs, and forge it into Bars, (which is by much the moſt laborious Part of the Work) by the Aſſiſtance of his Negroes, it is evident to Demonſtration, that the *American* Bar Iron (if allow'd to be imported *Duty free* into every Port of *Britain*, the Point concluded for by this Bill) can be afforded ſo much cheaper than the Native Bar Iron of *Britain*; that thoſe fatal Conſequences which we ſo much apprehend muſt inevitably enſue, *viz.* the ſilencing of our Forges, and the Deſtruction of our Woods, which conſtitute ſo large a Part of the *landed Intereſt* of this Kingdom.

I am at a Loſs to know what this Writer means (p. 23.) by the Parallel he draws between *Wool* and *Iron*. I know of no foreign Wool imported *Duty free*, the *Spaniſh* Wool only excepted, which is as eſſentially neceſſary to the Conſtruction of our Superfine Cloths, as the *Swediſh* Iron is to our Steel Manufactury, or our Shipping. We buy them both from thoſe Countries for the very ſame Reaſon, which is, *becauſe we cannot do without them.* If we could *grow* as fine Wool at Home as the *Spaniſh*; or could procure Iron of the ſame *Quality* as the *Orgroond*, either from the Mines of *Britain* or *America*, ſhould we buy one Ounce of *either* from *Spain* or *Sweden?* Can we import Wool from any Country in *Europe* (*Spain* excepted) equal in Goodneſs, to what grows in our own Dominions? If Wool could be procur'd of equal Goodneſs from *Flanders*, *Germany* and *Poland*, (p. 24.) would *France* purchaſe ours at ſo high a Price from our Owlers? Would our Owlers run the terrible Hazard of Outlawry, and inevitable Death (if taken) if they did not think the Profit *worth* the *Danger?* We grow already more Wool than we can conſume, witneſs the preſent

preſent very low Price of it, notwithſtanding the vaſt Quantities of which are annually ſmuggled into *France*. We permit *Iriſh* Wool indeed, to be brought into a few *licenced* Ports in *England*, not becauſe we *really* want it, but to prevent that moſt valuable Material from falling into the Hands of our hereditary Enemies. Alas! the Woollen Manufactury has long been in a declining Condition, and I fear declines daily; ſhould we then be oblig'd to grub up our Woodlands, and convert them into Sheep-Walks, as I have plainly prov'd, this Bill will oblige us to do, by ſilencing our Forges, the Wool Growers might then raiſe an Outcry indeed, (p. 23.) ſince Wool in that Caſe, muſt either be a *mere Drug* at Home, or increaſe the Smugglers Harveſt for a *French* Market.

As this Bill proceeds on the Suppoſition, that the Importation of Bar Iron from *America Duty free* to every Port in *England*, will ſave us thoſe *large Sums of Money* which we ſend annually to the North for Iron, I ſhall here conſider that very popular Topick, which is the Subject of ſo much plauſible Declamation, and appears ſo formidable to thoſe who are Strangers to the Genius of Commerce.

That Naval Stores of all Kinds are eſſentially neceſſary to our very Exiſtence as a trading Nation, and a maritime Power will be granted.—Oak we have large *Quantities* of for Plank and Timber, and ſuperior in *Quality* to any yet known for thoſe Uſes. Elm we have for Keels in ſufficient Quantity, and ſufficient for our largeſt Demands for that Purpoſe. How wrong a Meaſure muſt it then be to paſs any Bill into a Law, which tends ſo manifeſtly to leſſen, if not totally deſtroy the Production of thoſe valuable Stores in this Iſland, which muſt be the Conſequence if this Bill ſhould paſs into a Law, as I ſhall ſhew preſently, Maſts for our largeſt Ships we are oblig'd to fetch from *New-England*; becauſe we cannot procure any of ſo very large a Size from *Ruſſia*. Maſts for all our Ships of War from fourth Rates downwards incluſively, we import from *Ruſſia*; becauſe we not only find the *Ruſſian* Maſts to be ſuperior in *Quality*

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to any of thoſe brought from *New England*, but alſo by the Shortneſs of the Diſtance leſs expenſive, and much more eaſily imported from thence than from *New England*, eſpecially in Time of War. Neceſſity therefore alone compells us to go for Maſts to *America*, becauſe we can procure no others of equal Size, and at the ſame Time cannot fit out our 1ſt, 2d, and 3d Rates without them. Pitch and Tar we are obliged to import in large Quantities from the North; and muſt be compell'd to do it till our *American* Tar can be made equal in *Quality* to the Tar of *Sweden* and *Norway*. Hemp we have entirely from *Ruſſia*, which is better for Cordage, and cheaper than any we can poſſibly procure from any other Country. We receive likewiſe from thence large Quantities of Flax and Sail-Cloth, as our own Manufactury of Sail-Cloth is yet but in its Infancy. Iron for Anchors, *&c.* we fetch from *Sweden*. It is allowed that for all theſe Articles, including Iron, Pot-Aſh, Bees-Wax, *&c.* from *Ruſſia*, we pay annually a very conſiderable Balance in Foreign Coin, which in the Commercial Language is termed Bullion.

I have fairly ſtated this very popular Plea, and I muſt now ask, --- which Way is the Exportation of Foreign Coin or Bullion in the leaſt prejudicial to the national Intereſt? The national Coin is render'd ſacred by Law, as it ought always to be in every Country which is deſtitute of Mines of Gold and Silver; but Foreign Coin, or Bullion, is in a commercial Light as much a Commodity as Lead or Tin. Induſtry is the true Source of Wealth, and whilſt we have that, our Manufactures will produce us Gold and Silver.

If therefore the Argument drawn from the Exportation of Bullion, be at all concluſive, it will conclude much more ſtrongly againſt the *Eaſt-India* Company, which pays annually a much larger Balance in Bullion for Commodities, ſome of which are uſeleſs, and many others mere Articles of Luxury only; whereas the Commodities imported from the North are abſolutely neceſſary to our very Exigence, as a Trading Nation, and a

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Maritime Power. Yet that Company always has received, and does ſtill receive, the greateſt Support and Encouragement from the Wiſdom of the Legiſlator.

This Writer triumphs much (p. 13) on the happy Conſequences of making Pitch and Tar in our own Plantations. I believe every Man who ſincerely loves his Country, is as much pleaſed with the Succeſs of that Undertaking as himſelf. For as Pitch and Tar never were, nor ever can be produced in our native Country; a Scheme of that kind never could do the leaſt poſſible Injury to our *Landed Intereſt*, which ought always to be the *firſt Object* of our Concern. But the Caſe of the Importation of Bar-Iron, as contended for in this Bill, is widely different; ſince (if it ſhould paſs into a Law) it muſt give a fatal Blow to a conſiderable Part of our Landed Intereſt. I have already proved this, and ſhall confirm it ſtill more by the following Conſideration;---That by ſilencing our Forges, it will oblige us to grub up our Wood Land, and in the End prove the Deſtruction of our Timber, and the *ruin* of our Leather Trade. Every one who is acquainted with the Nature of Vegetation, muſt be ſenſible how abſolutely neceſſary Coppices are for the Growth of Timber, ſince the young tender Saplings could neither ſtand the Cold in Winter, nor the Heat in Summer, without the Defence and Shelter of Underwood. Now the Method of the Wood-Owner is this,---He divides his Wood into a Number of *Cuts*, proportionable to the Number of Years required by the Soil to produce Wood fit for Charcoal. At the firſt cut he leaves all thoſe Saplings which appears moſt likely to come to good Timber, and he does the ſame in *every other Cut* till he returns to the firſt *Cut*, which now ſucceeds in Rotation, and affords a freſh Supply of Charcoal. He then takes away the leaſt promiſing of the Trees left before for Timber, and ſo on in every ſucceeding *Cut*, gradually thinning the Timber Trees in every Cut, as they advance in Size, 'till he leaves room for a ſufficient Supply of Nouriſhment for every Tree, 'till it comes to its full Growth. That

this is the conſtant Practice of the Wood-Owners, who ſupply the Forges, may be proved by ocular Demonſtration, to any one who will look over the large Old Woods deſtin'd for that Purpoſe, which abound with Timber Trees up to the Growth of even *one hundred Years*. Thus our Iron Furnaces and Forges are *real Nurſes* for Coppices and Timber, and *real Wood Preſervers*, inſtead of *Wood Devourers*, as this Writer (p. 22) is pleaſed *ludicrouſly to ſtile them*, in which *ludicrous Term* conſiſts the whole Force of his *Proof*.

How eſſentially neceſſary the Oak-Bark is to the Manufactury of Leather, every Tanner can inform us. By the Aſſiſtance of our Coppices preſerved for the Uſe of our Forges, we are able not only to ſupply our own Demand, but *Ireland* likewiſe with this moſt uſeful Material. I again repeat the *Aſſiſtance* of our Coppices *preſerved* for our Forges, becauſe the Supply of Bark from them is, and (whilſt the Forges remain) ever will be *permanent and conſtant*, whilſt the Supply from *caſual Falls* of Wood muſt be extremely *precarious*. For as the Proſpect of Profit from Timber only is extremely diſtant, the Profit ariſing from Bark alone would never pay the Rent of the Ground which the Underwood muſt ſhade. Thus our Timber, our Coppices, and our Bark, muſt (if this Bill paſs into a Law) all ſink in one common Ruin with our Forges. As this Writer has no where pointed out to us any Reſource for a Supply in caſe of ſuch an Event; I ſuppoſe he expects that we ſhould import *this Material* too from *America*, and reſerves it to make up his Cargo of *light* and *heavy*.

I ſhall paſs over his Aſſertions relating to the *Qualities* of *American* Iron, (p. 11 and 16) becauſe *bare Aſſertion* without *Proof* is of no Weight on either Side, and proper Proof will be undoubtedly required by thoſe who are to be the *final* Judges. But I muſt juſt remark upon his Aſſertion, (p. 13) that Iron in Bars can be more commodiouſly *ſtow'd* in the *Hold* of a Ship than Iron in Pigs; that from the little Knowledge I have of the Stowage of a Ship) it is juſt as abſurd, as if any one ſhould aſſert, that Wood in Plank

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is of more commodious *Stowage* in the *Hold* of a Ship than Wood Billets.

The Argument on which this Writer depends moſt, is drawn from the following Conſideration, (p. 15) that as the *Americans* are not able to take from us a Quantity of our Manufactury equal to their Demands for them, becauſe they are not able to make proper Returns for ſuch Manufactures, by way of Barter or Payment; therefore if the *Americans* were allowed to ſend us *more* raw Materials, they would be able to take *more* wrought Goods from the *Britiſh* Manufacturers in Exchange, a Commerce which would prove to be moſt highly advantageous to both Countries: Hence he infers the Reaſon (which he calls the moſt intereſting to *Great Britain*) why this Bill ſhould paſs into a Law.

In anſwer to this I muſt obſerve, with reſpect to the Importation of Bar-Iron, (the *only Material* contended for in this Bill) the very *Reverſe* of this Propoſition is *moſt probable*; and in Caſes of this Nature we are able to reaſon on both Sides only from Probability.

If the *Americans* would ſupply us in Barter, or Payment, with unmanufactured Commodities, ſuch as Iron in Pigs, Hemp, Flax, Pot-Aſh, Bees-Wax, and ſuch kind of *raw Materials*, or with ſuch kind of manufactured Commodities as would neither interfere with our Landed Intereſt, or Home Manufactures, as Pitch, Tar, Yards, Maſts, and ſuch like, his Argument would be extremely juſt. But if the *American* Manufacturer, by the Cheapneſs of his Iron, by the Profit of manufacturing that Iron at Home, by ſaving the many Expences, and by avoiding the many Delays and Diſappointments, and the Damage which muſt neceſſarily attend the Exportation of his Bar-Iron to *Britain*, and the Importation of the manufactured Goods back again to *America*, will upon an Average reap an Advantage of 45 *l. per Cent.* then the Probability will be ſtrongly againſt the Benefits propoſed by this Bill.

It is objected by this Writer (p. 17) (who treats all Apprehenſions of this Nature as Chimerical) " that

" nothing but *abſolute Neceſſity* can oblige the *Ameri-*
" *cans* to commence Manufacturers, which *Neceſſity*
" *muſt ariſe* from our not allowing them *the Means* of
" purchaſing our Manufactures; and that this *their*
" *Neceſſity* has been the Cauſe of their ſetting up ſo
" *Works* already of different Kinds."

But this Objection (by this Writer's own Confeſſion) *comes too late*. For he acknowledges in his very Objection, that the *Americans* have *already ſet up many Works* of different Kinds, from a Neceſſity which (as he affirms) is *cauſed by our not allowing them the Means of purchaſing our Manufactures*. But this Writer muſt pardon me if I affirm, that this Aſſertion is not ſtrictly true. In the late War with *France*, *many Works* were ſet up in *America*, particularly Looms for *Woollen and Linen Cloth in ſuch Number*, that a Governor of *Maryland* reported to the Secretary of State for that Department, " That the Houſes in *Maryland* alone " were full of them.

The *true Plea* for this Proceeding of theirs, was this; that the Merchant Ships freighted with thoſe Commodities for the Uſe of our Northern Colonies, were *detain'd* ſo long at *Spithead*, by contrary Winds, or waiting for Convoy, that the Goods were either *ſo much damag'd* by lying ſo long on Board, or ſo dear from the Expences neceſſarily occaſion'd by that Delay; that they were either *utterly unſerviceable*, or offer'd to Sale at a Price *too high for their Ability to purchaſe*. *This was the true State of the Caſe*, which aroſe not from *our Fault*, but from our *Misfortune*, ſince the *Britiſh* Exporters in that Caſe, muſt be the *greateſt*, if not the *only* Sufferers. Now as we never have been, nor can ever hope to be *long* at Peace with *France*, the *ſame Plea of Neceſſity* will be always a ready Excuſe for the *Americans* to make in Favour of *new Works*, and *new Manufacturies*. For can human Power *inſure* a fair Wind; or can the Neceſſities of Government always permit them to provide an *immediate ſufficient Convoy*, when at War with a formidable Power?

Conſequently this Bill (if it ſhould paſs into a Law) would be ſo far from procuring to us the Benefits propoſed

poſed by its Advocates, that the *Americans* will be no more perſuaded *to break up their already numerous Works and Looms, merely to pleaſe the* Britiſh *Manufacturers*, than (to make Uſe of his own Conceſſion, in his own Words, p. 17.) " They will *now* be perſuaded to " break up their numerous Iron Works to pleaſe the " Iron Maſters of *England.*

To enforce this Objection, this Writer aſſerts, (p. 18.) " That a ſuppoſed *Rivalſhip* between our Colo- " nies and us is *impoſſible*, as far as concerns the Iron " Manufactury," from the high Price of Labour in *America*; from the Inability of the Negroes to perform the Work *ſo cheap*, or ſo *well* as *White Men*; and from *the Want* of *Pit-Coal*; as he looks upon this *Stroke* as *deciſive*, he triumphs greatly, (p. 19.) on his imaginary Victory. But if we bring this ſanguine Writer to the Teſt of Truth, we ſhall find him juſt as *unfortunate* in his *Aſſertions* in *this* Objection, as he was in *thoſe* in the *former.*

The Objection drawn from *the high Price of Labour in* America, *and the ſuppoſed Inability of the Negroes* to perform the *Work* in the Iron Manufactury *ſo cheap* and *ſo well* as *white Men*, I have ſpoke to and diſproved already. But this Writer aſſerts, " That the *Ameri-* " *cans* have *no Pit-coal* on this Side of the *Apalathean* Mountains, a Space which comprehends almoſt all the Land worth inhabiting which the *French* Coſmographers are pleaſed to allow us on the Continent of *America.* We on the other Side affirm, that they have *Pit-Coal*, and may find vaſt Quantities of it in that immenſe Tract of Land which lies on this Side of the *Apalathean* Mountains, as ſoon as their troubleſome Neighbours will ſuffer them to live in Peace. But admitting even that they had no Pit-Coal how would the *want* of *that* render their *Iron Manufacturies* unable to *rival ours?* It is a well known Fact; that Iron can be *ſlit* and *manufactur'd by hand* at a reaſonable Expence without the Aid of ſlitting Mills where there is great Plenty of Charcoal; and that we make uſe of Pit-Coal in our own Country; becauſe it is much cheaper to us than Charcoal. The Argument will

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then turn upon this ſhort Point.—Either the *Americans have* Pit-Coal or they *have not*. If they have Pit-Coal, the Objection drops; if they have it not, they muſt find their end anſwered as well by the Uſe of Charcoal. For it has been proved at the Board of Trade and before ſeveral Committees upon former Occaſions, by the cleareſt Evidence, "That ſo long ago "as the Year 1733. there were ſix Furnaces and "*nineteen Forges* in *New England* only; and that ſuch "Improvements had been made there in the mechanic "*Arts*; *that Hoes*, *Axes*, *Scythes*, *Nails*, *and other* "*Iron Utenſils*, were made there not only for their own "Uſe, but exported from thence to the other Plantations.

This Writer aſſerts, (p. 18.) "That the *Swedes* are "far behind us in the Iron Manufactury (he might have added the *Ruſſians* too) and he imputes "this "*Backwardneſs* of theirs in the Iron Manufactury to "the Want of Pit-Coal becauſe they cannot procure "them but at ſuch a Price as will neceſſarily turn the "Balance in our Favour.

But if Charcoal will ſupply that Defect, of which both thoſe Countries poſſeſs an inexhauſtible Store, beſides the exceſſive Cheapneſs of their Labour, the true Cauſe muſt be (and it really is in Fact) the Want of Skill and able Artificers in the Iron Manufactures, in which Articles it is well known that the Artificers of our own Country exceed all the reſt of *Europe*. This Writer apprehends (p. 9.) "that as both *Swediſh* and "*Ruſſia* Iron are liable to the Comptroll of their reſpective "Governments, the Exportation of their Iron may "be *ſtopp'd* at Pleaſure (and from the preſent Appearance of publick Affairs he knows not how ſoon) or "may have additional Duties laid upon them in proportion as thoſe Governments ſhall take *a Diſguſt* "to or perceive that the *Britiſh* Nation cannot do "without their Iron.

His political Apprehenſions ariſing from the preſent Appearance of publick Affairs in the North, I have already ſhewn to be groundleſs. But if they ſhould ſtop the Exportation of their Iron from any *Diſguſt* to

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the *Britiſh* Nation, we may venture to affirm, that this *Diſguſt* will ariſe from their Jealouſy of our Colonies if this Bill ſhould paſs into a Law. I ſay this ſuppoſed *Diſguſt* will ariſe from *this Jealouſy only*. For it is certain that both *Sweden* and *Ruſſia are jealous*, leaſt our Colonies ſhould in time deprive them of the Trade with *Britain*, the Sweets of which they have ſo long experienced. Should they ſtop the Exportation of their Iron at *this time* (as this Writer apprehends they may do it ſoon) how deplorable our Situation muſt be is but too evident, ſince we have no other Reſource; a Conſideration which ſhould induce us to reject this Bill, and encourage the opening of new Mines in *Great Britain*, and increaſing the *Quantity* of *our own* Iron, which as it could give no Umbrage to thoſe Powers; would be the beſt Remedy for the Inconveniencies ariſing from the Want of Iron (if true) which are ſo louldly complained of by this Writer.

I ſincerely wiſh we could ſupply ourſelves with Hemp, Flax, as well as with Pitch and Tar from our Northern Colonies; but alas! this Writer has been unfortunate in the Choice of his Spot (p. 14) for that purpoſe; ſince by Account received from *America* dated laſt *October*, it too plainly appears, that as we have been obliged to leave the Country of the Six Nations to the Mercy of the *French*, "That fine "Country on the *Mohawks* River down to *Albany*, is "by this Step left open to the Ravages of the Ene-"my, and an eaſy Paſſage opened to the *French* and "their *Indians* into the Provinces of *Penſylvania* and "*New Jerſey*." If then Affairs of that Country are in ſo deſperate a Situation, as they are repreſented to be by our laſt Accounts, God alone knows how long our Northern Colonies may continue in our Poſſeſſion.

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